



Netwatch

By Jim Carroll

Your guide to business & accounting on the Internet

Net makes giving easier

Canadian CAs have long involved themselves in the community, donating their time and expertise to not-for-profit organizations either as board members or volunteers. They are busy providing guidance on such issues concerning business strategy, accounting

and financial systems and other matters, as well as undertaking general volunteer activities.

Therefore, CAs should be aware that a significant opportunity exists within the not-for-profit sector as fund-raising goes online, as well as with respect to volunteer recruitment through the Internet.

In the past few years, we've seen fund-raising take to

the Internet with a vengeance as an increasing number of not-for-profit groups allow donations to be made through their websites. For example, Coast to Coast Against Cancer 2003 (in which six cyclists rode from Vancouver to Halifax in a 10-day relay in June) featured an online donation system as the cornerstone of its fund-raising effort and, at press time, the

endeavor had raised more than \$400,000.

The Internet offers a variety of benefits when it comes to online fund-raising, including cost reduction and streamlined business processes such as issuance of electronic tax receipts. Furthermore, moving the donation process online need not be terribly complex. One of the leaders in Canada in this regard is Charity.ca, which provides all the tools and services that are necessary for moving a donation process online.

In addition, many online credit-card processing companies — for instance, Oakville's InternetSecure provides transaction services to organizations such as War Child Canada and World Federation of Hemophilia — can offer the guidance and infrastructure necessary to supporting online fund-raising.

A longstanding tradition in fund-raising involves door-to-door canvassing, but even that process has begun to go high-tech. Many charities now ensure that their fund-raising events include a method by which par-

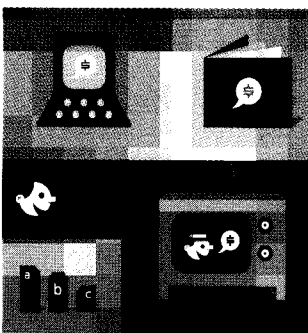
ticipating individuals can have a personalized, online sponsor page that permits donations via credit card. A good example of this is Heart and Stroke Foundation's annual Becel Ride for Heart in Toronto. Participating cyclists in the event are provid-

ed with a customized Web page address for soliciting and collecting online donations. In this way, participants can send e-mails to their friends anywhere in the world and ask for a donation, thereby increasing the potential sponsorship list dramatically.

If you are involved with the volunteer sector, you should be aware of the types of sophisticated technology described above so you can provide appropriate guidance to those organizations that you are involved with.

In addition to understanding the technology behind online fund-raising, you should also be aware that the charitable sector is now using the Internet as a volunteer recruitment tool. Check out CharityVillage.com, which bills itself as "Canada's supersite for the nonprofit sector" featuring "3,000 pages of news, jobs, information and resources for executives, staffers, donors and volunteers." On the site, you can find a listing of charities organized by province that are seeking volunteers.

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ONLINE GIVING

Charity.ca www.charity.ca

Coast to Coast Against Cancer
www.coasttocoastride.com

InternetSecure www.internetsecure.com

Heart and Stroke Foundation
www.heartandstroke.ca

CanadaHelps www.Canadahelps.org

Charity Village www.charityvillage.com